Middle school students get hands-on career training

Cabrillo program runs through July

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APTOS — In one classroom, students listen as the instructor tells them how to manipulate a photo’s color, then get to work putting the instructions to practice.

“I knew nothing about Photoshop, so this is all new,” said Jack Peters, 12, who will soon enter seventh grade.

Instructor Alixandria Mullins is spending this week teaching him and 19 other students, all of them entering seventh, eighth or ninth grades, the basics of digital media as part of the pilot Youth Summer Institute program at Cabrillo College.

The goal is to give middle-school students some in-depth, hands-on experience in fields they might be interested in pursuing, allowing them to test the waters and maybe clarify their career paths.

Luan Seaman, who’s coordinating the Youth Summer Institute, launched the program after hearing about a similar program at another community college.

“The idea is to expose them to that career area, but also do hands-on activities,” she said. “If we expose seventh- and eighth-graders to career fields, they’re going to be more successful and motivated to stay in school.”

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